



Committee On Finance

Max Baucus, Ranking Member

NEWS RELEASE

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DEMOCRATIC SENATORS CALL ON SNOW TO PROTECT TAXPAYERS

Washington, DC – *Senate Democratic Leader Harry Reid, Finance Committee Ranking Member Max Baucus and Appropriations Committee Member Patty Murray, sent the following letter to Treasury Secretary John Snow calling on him to address the National Taxpayer Advocate report that low-income taxpayers' rights are being violated by the IRS:*

January 20, 2006

The Honorable John W. Snow
Department of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20220

Dear Secretary Snow:

We are extremely troubled by the findings reported by the National Taxpayer Advocate in her 2005 Annual Report to Congress concerning the Internal Revenue Service's Questionable Refund Program (QRP). The report includes among its allegations that the IRS freezes refunds of many low-income taxpayers for long periods of time without telling them why, and that the program is not particularly efficient at identifying fraudulent returns. It should be noted that the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA) has conducted several reviews of the QRP in recent years and reached similar conclusions. These reports indicate that hundreds of thousands of Americans may not be receiving the tax refunds to which they are legally entitled. More troubling is the suggestion by the Taxpayer Advocate that she believes taxpayer rights are being violated.

We request that you respond to each point raised in the Advocate's report concerning this program. Your comments should include an explanation of why concerns raised in prior year TIGTA reports were not addressed and corrected, and why problems with the program have been allowed to continue. We also request that you share with us your plans to remedy the problems identified and the timeframe in which you plan to accomplish this.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this very important matter. We would appreciate receiving your report by February 6, 2006.

Sincerely yours,

Harry Reid
Max Baucus
Patty Murray

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